

The Daily Gazetteer.

FRIDAY, MARCH 30. 1739

Nº 1175.



It is scarce possible for any Man, and least of all for a publick Writer, to divest himself of all Concern for what is said of him, so I must confess, that nothing hath so much encouraged me in the Course of my Labours, as the Assurances I have received from various

Correspondents, that my Papers on Subjects altogether removed from Party, have been esteemed useful, and have been allowed to breathe a publick Spirit. This hath given me greater Satisfaction, because I have been conscious that what was said on this Head was fristly true, and that I had in Fact no other Motive to the writing and publishing these Discourses, than that of rendering the most useful Service in my Power to my Country. Incouraged by these Declarations, and the Sense of my own Integrity, I shall proceed, without any Apprehensions, in the same Track, and shall, from time to time, communicate to the Publick whatever, with mature Reflection, I think worthy of its Notice.

It has been observed by many judicious Historians and grave Politicians, that the Transactions at the Theatre are the strongest Indications of the Temper of a People. Of this we have in ancient Authors many Instances so full and clear, that if I were to cite and explain them, I make no Question but that the Point would be fully proved. However, I shall decline this: First, because it would draw my Paper into an extraordinary Length; and, Secondly, because I think the Fact may be as well, or rather better proved by considering the Nature of Dramatick Entertainments. For since these are exhibited to Delight a mix'd Audience, it is most evident that they must answer this End with more or less Effect, in Proportion as they agree with the Humour and Disposition of the Majority of the Audience. Hence the Difference between old and new Plays; hence the apparent Conformity between the Spirit of Comedy under the Reigns of our several Princes, and the Spirit of the People under the same Reigns. Under King James I. even our Comedies are sprinkled with Learning; and there is no relishing them thoroughly without a Tincture of Scholastick Knowledge. Under the Reign of his Son they were graver, more quaint, and fuller of Turn and Point. In the Time of Charles II. Gallantry, and a modish Licentiousness, render'd a Comedy taking. To carry Things lower would not explain my Meaning better, and might not perhaps answer my Purpose so well: I will therefore rest this Matter here, as having fully shewn, that there cannot be a better chosen Touchstone of the Temper of an Age, than the State of the Theatre therein.

THE present Situation of the Stage hath justly offended all Parties. It is true that a certain Faction clamoured at the Care taken by the Legislature to prevent its serving the Purposes of Sedition; and they were in the Right to Clamour, because serving those was serving their Purposes. Yet, as I observed before, all Parties are agreed in lamenting the present Declension of Taste, our unreasonable Fondness for gaudy Entertainments, and our preposterous Passion for Singers and Dancers; all which tend to destroy a true and solid Judgment of Dramatick Diversions, and to the extirpating of that Genius which was formerly an Honour to our Nation. The Truth of this Observation is so visible, that I presume nobody will be found hardy enough to deny it: No modern Tragedy lives above a Season; few Comedies have a better Fate; so that if it were not for what are called Stock Plays, we should have nothing but a Mountebank's Entertainment, or, at most, now and then a new Ballad Opera. I am very far from believing that this is owing to any want of Capacity in our Poets, which I know is the Cause commonly assigned; and I am confirmed in this Opinion from the Observations that I have made on the Revolutions in the Drama here and elsewhere, which have made it plain to me, that where-ever an Audience shewed a nice and critical Judgment, founded on the Laws of Nature and Poetry, there hath always followed a quick Succession of great Poets; so powerful is the Spirit of Emulation when any hopes appear of gaining true and lasting Fame; but when there is no Encouragement of this kind, when an Audience can be drawn by

Tumbling, French Dancing, or an old Ballad or two, we need not wonder that our new Tragedies are languid, and our Comedies deficient, either in Sense or Spirit.

BUT it is not only from such Considerations as these, that our Theatres, as they stand at present, have sunk in their Regulation; there are also many other attendant Evils, which are so very notorious, that it is certainly high Time that they were redressed. For Instance; the Croud of Coaches and Chairs, is not greater than that of Pick-pockets and Thieves of a worse Class. Every Day we see Numbers of Advertisements declaring the Mischiefs of the preceding Evening, and promising what the Law has made it penal to promise that if the Things stolen shall be returned, a Premium shall be given, and no Questions asked. So that as on the one Hand there is not sufficient Care taken to prevent continual Pilfering about the Theatres, on the other likewise Custom has embolden'd People so far as to enter openly into a direct Commerce with Thieves, by a Method, which, of all others, gives them the greatest Security, and the most dangerous Encouragement. On the whole, therefore, I think I may be justified in saying, that it is both the Duty and Interest of those who have the Management of our Theatres, to provide an effectual Remedy against this Evil; the Consequences of which are as scandalous, as the Thing itself is notorious, and past all bearing.

WITHIN Doors the Audience are very often entertained, or, to speak plainly, disturbed with Matters which have no Relation to the End for which they come there. Instead of judging of the Propriety of Action, they have been of late frequently called upon to decide the Causes of Actors, which, with great Submission to better Judges, seems to be an Employment altogether unfit for a Playhouse. If indeed this had only happen'd once, twice, or thrice, it would not have been worth taking Notice of; but, as it grows common, it certainly deserves Animadversion, lest Custom should become Authority, and Appeals should be constantly and regularly brought to the Pit from the Green-Room. It was an Objection long ago made against Plays themselves, that they frequently gave Occasion to Quarrels, Tumults, and publick Disturbances; but if to the Causes proper for the Ear of an Audience, this new Sort of Judicature should be also joined, I doubt we shall hear this Objection pressed with greater Warmth than ever; and therefore, for the Sake both of the Players and the Spectators, I should be heartily glad to hear some pacifick Genius had struck out a Method for ending these Theatrical Disputes by Way of Arbitration; provided always, that it was done behind the Scenes.

BEFORE I quit this Topick, it is fit I should remark, that in these Cases Counsel are no sooner heard from the Stage, than the Pleadings are entered on Record in the publick Prints; then the Conversation of the Town naturally rolls upon the same important Subject, and every private Company in London debates the Merit of the Cause. After this comes personal Applications; each of the litigating Parties sue for Protection, the Case has several Hearings in the Theatre, and is at last decided, after two or three Uproars, not much perhaps to the Satisfaction of either Party. Sure, this is not very consistent with the Respect that is due to the Publick! A Recital of private Quarrels is not worth paying Money to hear. There is no Manner of Dissension in breaking one's Brains to understand the Customs of the House, the Nature of Cartels, and the Forms of the Green-Room B-fides; of late Confusions have been bred by other Causes; not long ago there was an Instance of a Fellow's voluntarily rolling himself from the Upper-Gallery into the Pit. If these Whims should become frequent, People will be afraid of exposing themselves to Danger, where they were wont to come for Diversion; and consequently the better Part of the Audience will, in Point of Prudence, keep out of Harm's Way, and rather amuse themselves with Congresses and Wycherley in their Closets, than run the Hazard of having their Bones broke to have a Sight of Pieret and Harlequin.

HERETOFORE the Enemies of Dramatick Entertainments were silenced by our shewing them the most exalted Strains of Morality in our Tragedies, and the keenest and most delicate Strokes of Satire in our Comedies; but now, when nothing will go down

without an Entertainment, it is not so easy for a grave Man to defend the Stage, or, at least to defend it better than he can a Puppet Show. The utmost that can be said in favour of our modern Inventions, is that they are entertaining, and that is but a poor Argument in their Favour, when we consider that their Predecessors insisted always that their Performances were equally pleasant and instructive. I know it may be said that our Entertainments are borrowed chiefly from the Italians, who are a grave, thinking People, as well as we: But then it must be remembered that the Italians are not free; that it would be dangerous for a Poet to write with that Licence which can only render a Play taking here, and that an Actor would also run some Hazard in delivering the Sentiments of his Author, if they were in the least hardy; and therefore Buffonry is very excusable there, and for the same Reason as inexcusable in a Country where these Circumstances do none of them occur.

It is better that these Facts should be stated while there is yet Room for Amendment, than that they should remain un-noticed till by some unlucky Accident they come to be exposed in a worse Light. In the Reigns of King William and Queen Anne, the Crown interposed for the correcting Theatrical Disorders. In the present Case, I am very far from suggesting that there is need of any extraordinary Interposition. On the contrary, I am of Opinion, that if those whom these things most nearly concern would but attentively consider the Nature of Dramatick Entertainments, the Consequence thereof to Society, and their own Interests in conducting them properly, they would quickly fall upon proper Methods for remedying all these Complaints, for restoring the Stage to its former Lustre, and reviving that Taste for virtuous and masculine Performances which heretofore distinguished a British Audience. If this, or any succeeding Paper, shall anywise contribute to so good a Purpose, it will fully answer my Desire, and much more than compensate the little Pains I have already taken, or may hereafter take upon this Subject.

R. FREEMAN.

Leghorn, March 2. O. S.

SOME Advices from the Isle of Corfica say, That 3000 French marching from Calvi with 2 Mortars and 2 Pieces of Cannon, in order to take an important Post in the Province of Balagna, the Malecontents suffer'd them to come near, and then fell upon them with 6000 Men, by which, after an obstinate Fight, they were oblig'd to retire with Loss of their Baggage, &c. Our Great Duke's Reduction of the Interest on the Mounts of Piety from Three One-half to Three per Cent will bring in 60000 Crowns to the Ducal Treasure. His Highness perceiving some old Galley-Slaves so feeble that they could scarce stir the Oar, order'd them to be set at Liberty.

Rome, March 3. O. S. Two Days ago the Pope sent one of his Domestick Prelates to the Chevalier de St. George, to thank him for his Care in sending several Times to inquire after his Health. As the Grave-Diggers were digging under the High Altar of the Church of Grotta-Terrata, an Urn was found with the Arms of the Conti Family, and an intire Body in it, which 'tis not doubted is the Body of Pope Benedict VIII. who, at the Time of the Schism, retired to that Place.

Schaffhausen, March 12. O. S. The Abbot of St. Blaise having a Law-Suit with his Subjects in the Black Forest, apply'd to the Aulic Council of the Empire, who gave him a Verdict, whereby they were oblig'd to pay Costs of Suit; which they refusing to do, the Abbot obtain'd a Detachment of 300 Men from the Garisons of Brebourg and Brisac to levy them by Force of Arms. Three thousand of the Foresters assembled together immediately, with a Resolution to defend themselves to the last Drop of their Blood; but after the Imperial Troops began to march down upon them, some of those who had taken Arms laid them down, and submitted to their Abbot.

Frankfort, March 18. O. S. We are assur'd, that the Emperor and the King of France, jointly with

the Electors of Cologne, Bavaria and Palatine, have agreed to guarantee the Prince of Sultzbach for two Years in the Provisional Possession of the Duchies of Juliers and Berg; and that it is regulated at the same time, that if the Elector Palatine should die, the Elector of Bavaria shall be appointed his Guardian in the Place of the late Duke Ferdinand of Bavaria.

Paris, March 24. O. S. Letters of the 7th Inst. O. S. from Genoa say, That on the same Day of the Month N. S. about 200 of the Rebels came in fight of Bastia, to rob and carry off several Husbandmen that were then at work, and burnt two Houses belonging to the Father of a young Officer in the Service of the Republick, who had killed one of their Leaders. The Letters of the same Date from Calvi say, That the King's Forces were in Motion for the Attack of Montemaggiore, an important Post in the Province of Balagna, and had brought up a large Mortar and the small Artillery design'd for that Purpose to the Convent of Dalziprato; whereupon the Rebels having demanded a Reinforcement from Luke Ornani, had made a considerable Appearance on the neighbouring Hills, and fir'd from thence upon our Camp with Musket Ball. 'Twas reported that the Sieurs Castineta and Giacinto Paoli were arriv'd at Santa Reparata in Balagna with about 500 Highlanders well arm'd, and expected to be join'd by more. The Letters add, that our Forces have carried off 50 Head of Black Cattle, and about 100 Sheep from the Rebels about the Red Island, and that they have taken a more considerable Booty on the Side of St. Pelegrino. As the Corsairs have lately taken several Ships in those Seas, the Republick has sent out two Gallies to give them Chace. — Great Preparations are making at our Town-House against the 4th of April, when the Peace with the Emperor is to be proclaimed.

They write from Petersburg, That the Count de Lascy was actually set out for the Army, and that General Munich would soon follow: That the Czarina has resolv'd to remonstrate again to the King and Republick of Poland by her Minister at Warsaw, that tho' the Republick refuses to favour the United Arms of the Emperor and the Czarina in case they should happen to touch upon the Polish Territory, there was nevertheless an indispensable Necessity of advancing very near it. All that can be infer'd from hence is, that 'tis resolv'd that the United Forces shall pursue their common Enemies, wherever they are, tho' the Republick should refuse their Consent to it. — A Courier was arriv'd at Petersburg, by the Way of Choczim, from the English and Dutch Ambassadors at Constantinople, with Advice, that the Grand Vizier had caus'd the principal Turkish Standard to be display'd at the Gate of the Seraglio, to denote his speedy Departure for Hungary.

FOREIGN PORTS.

Leghorn, March 23. N. S. On the 19th Instant arrived the Fame, Harris, from Messina: On the 20th, the Friendship, Grace, from Alexandria: On the 22d, the Satisfaction, Young, from Algiers: On the 21st, sailed the Bristol Merchant, Scott, for Bristol: On the 22d, the Love, Pearson, for Amsterdam; and this Day the Ann, Morshead, for London.

Cadiz, March 17. N. S. On the 9th Instant arrived the Mary, Campion, from Leghorn: On the 11th, the Elizabeth, Mac Carty, from ditto, and sailed the 14th for Lisbon; the Charming Peggy, Weston, from Palermo, and sailed the 14th for Lisbon: On the 12th, the Britannia, Kelsey, from London; the Dublin Merchant, Bafner, from Gibraltar; the Success, Nicholson, from St. Sebastian's; and the Mary, Thompson, from Dungarvan: On the 13th, the Thomond, White, from Gibraltar: On the 14th, the Ann, Grimbale, from Lisbon for Genoa; and the Happy George, Fitz Gerald, from the Canaries: On the 13th, sailed the St. Andrew, Barrett, for the Canaries: On the 16th, the Hope, Macdowall, for the Levant; the Pleasant, Donoghoe, for Lisbon; the Orange Tree, Gaden, for the North.

Lisbon, March 14. N. S. On the 8th Instant arrived the Heylyn, Dick, from Carolina; the Constant Ann, Brown, from Cork; and the Torrington, Warcup, from Cagliari: On the 11th, the Ann, Barrett, from Biscay; and the Eleanor, Moore, from Cork: On the 12th, the St. Paul, Murphy, from Cork; the Carolina Merchant, Potter, from Topsham; the Mary Ann, Cuir, from London; the Queen Esther, Slade, from ditto; the Happy Deliverance, Barnes, from Cork; and the Hanover Packer, Enouff, from Falmouth: On the 13th, the Elean. Donavon, from Cork: On the 14th, the Speed-

well, Archer, from Alicant; the Mermaid, James, from ditto; and the Matilda, Hanway, from London: On the 8th, sailed the Merling, Hurruc, for Mazagam: On the 9th, the Ann, Grimbale, for the Streights: On the 10th, the Vineyard, Hilton, for Yarmouth: On the 11th, the Valiant, Gillingham, for Cacheu; the King of Portugal, Hughs, for London: and the George and Mary, Rowe, for England: On the 12th, the Friendship, Ogilvie, for Scotland: On the 13th, the Ebor, Rundell, for St. Michael's.

HOME PORTS.

Deal, March 28. Wind E. N. E. Remains the Swedish Ship: Came down Yesterday after Post and sailed thro', the Lucitania, Burchley, for Gibraltar; the Fox, Cumby, for Lisbon; the Cornwall, Skinner, for Falmouth; the Providence, Sloper, for Port Mahon; the Grove, Pearson, for Oporto; and the Partridge, Penhallow, for Maryland. Came down this Forenoon and remains, the Fly Sloop of War, Capt. Oates. Arrived the Success, Simpson, from St. Valery.

Gravesend, March 28. Passed by the Mary, Worms, from Hamburg.

The Prince of Orange, Urc, from London and Cowes, is arrived at Cork.

LONDON.

Extract of a Letter from Cadiz, dated March 17. N. S.

'Last Week arrived here the three Men of War, the Galga, the Paloma, and the San Francisco Xavier, with the San Bruno Merchant Man, from Buenos Ayres, which they left the 27th of August last, and the River of Plate the 27th of November, and came in 103 Days. The two Men of War who remain'd in that River were careening, and may be expected here in June. Two others that have lain ready here some time, we reckon will soon be dispatched, and are to carry over a new Governor. The Cargo brought by the Men of War and St. Bruno, is 1,317,520 Pieces of Eight, 7960 Marks of wrought Plate, 3344 Pistoles, 1203 Ounces Ingots and wrought Gold, 29,908 Hides in the Hair, 1309 Arroves of Vicuna Wool, 64 ditto Alpaga Wool, 61 Quintals of Elephants Teeth, and 184 Barrels of Tallow. Some Ships were blown out of our Bay two Days ago by a violent Levant Wind, which still continues.

The Middleton, Capt. Fotherby, of Biddeford, was lost the 16th Instant O. S. about 15 Miles to the Southward of Boulogne; all the Crew saved.

Yesterday the Right Hon. the Marquis of Lindsey, eldest Son and Heir Apparent to his Grace the Duke of Ancaster, Lord Great Chamberlain of England, set out from his House in Grosvenor's-Square for his Seat in Lincolnshire.

The same Day the Right Hon. Thomas Lord Leigh took the Oaths and his Seat in the House of Peers, in the Room of his Father, lately deceased.

High Water this Day at London Bridge.	Morning 03 31	Evening 03 45
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Bank Stock no Price India 169 to 1-half. South Sea 101. Old Annuity 112 7-8ths. New ditto 110 3-4ths. Three per Cent. 105. Seven per Cent. Loan 110 1-4th. Five per Cent. ditto 92. Royal Assurance 102. London Assurance 12 1-half. African 13 1-half. India Bonds 61. 10s. Premium. South Sea ditto 21. 9s. Prem. Bank Circulation 21. 12s. 6d. Premium. Salt Tallies 1-half to 2 Premium. English Copper 31. 5s. Welsh ditto 15s. Three 1-half per Cent. Exchequer Orders 5 1-half per Cent. Prem. Three per Cent. ditto 99 3-4ths per Cent. Prem. Million Bank 124.

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